

Regular Meeting

Agenda Item #	4
Meeting Date	July 26, 2004
Prepared By	Jessie Carpenter for Mayor Porter
Approved By	Barbara B. Matthews City Manager

Discussion Item	Resolution re: Council Rules and Procedures
Background	<p>As a result of an ongoing discussion of setting forth rules and procedures for Council meetings, City Council members drafted a resolution for discussion at the July 19 worksession. The Council adopted a similar resolution in 1993 (copy provided in the July 19 package).</p> <p>The attached resolution reflects changes agreed to by Council on July 19, plus one clarification on worksessions in paragraph 6.</p>
Policy	The Council may adopt rules of procedure governing the conduct of Councilmembers and citizens at Council meetings and worksessions.
Fiscal Impact	None
Attachments	Resolution
Recommendation	Review and adopt the resolution.
Special Consideration	

Introduced by:

Resolution #2004-

COUNCIL RULES OF PROCEDURE

WHEREAS, the Council wishes to conduct its meetings in such a way as to maximize the opportunity for Takoma Park residents to participate; and

WHEREAS, Council meetings that continue until a very late hour inhibit the ability of residents to address the Council on issues that concern them; and

WHEREAS, the Council also wishes to conduct business in an efficient and timely manner.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT the City Council of Takoma Park, Maryland does hereby establish the following rules of procedure to govern the conduct of Council meetings:

- 1) Council meetings will commence at 7:30 p.m. unless otherwise advertised.
- 2) Council **comments** ~~announcements~~ are **permitted** ~~allowed~~ at the beginning of each meeting. ~~Announcements made by Councilmembers should be informational in nature. Discussion of substantive issues should be avoided during the announcement period.~~ At other times, Council comments should address the item under discussion.
- 3) Council announcements are followed by time for public comment at each meeting. Speakers may address items that are on the worksession agenda or any other topic. However, if the Council agenda includes voting on a resolution or ordinance, public comment should be given at the time the item is considered. Residents who wish to address the Council shall come to the podium, and state their name and street for the record. In general, speakers should limit their comments to no more than five minutes. During public comment, Councilmembers shall limit their comments to asking the speaker for information or providing them with information. All those present at Council meetings shall permit speakers to express their opinions without interruption.
- 4) Following public comment, each agenda item will be taken up. The Mayor, a Councilmember, or a City employee generally summarizes the content of the agenda item and states the action the Council is considering.
- 5) There are two kinds of Council meetings: legislative sessions and worksessions. Legislative sessions are generally held on the second and fourth Mondays of the month. At legislative sessions, the Council votes on ordinances and resolutions. Anytime the Council votes on legislation, there is time for Council discussion and for public comment, followed by the vote. Councilmembers are encouraged to work with City staff before Council meetings to make editorial changes to ordinances or resolutions. During Council

meetings, Councilmembers shall keep editorial changes to a minimum.

- 6) At worksessions, which are usually held on the first and third Mondays of the month, the Council discusses issues that may become future legislation, but generally does not take votes. A special session for voting on legislation may be included in a worksession if voting is time-sensitive. Worksessions allow members of the Council to discuss issues among themselves and with City staff. ~~and occasionally special guests.~~ Occasionally the Council will include residents who have specific information to bring to the worksession discussion. If residents wish to be recognized during worksessions, it is best if they let their Councilmember know of their interest before the meeting.
- 7) The Council may hold public hearings, which generally occur near the beginning of a meeting, in order to get public comment on an issue. Public hearings may be more structured than other public comment periods in order to accommodate many people who wish to speak. When a large number of people wish to address the Council on an issue, speakers may be asked to sign up to speak and limit their comments to three minutes. After everyone has had an opportunity to speak, speakers may address the Council a second time for an additional three minutes. Individuals who are signed up to speak or who are present at the meeting may cede their time to another speaker. However, no speaker may speak for more than nine minutes. ~~The Council discourages the practice of ceding time to another speaker given the multiple opportunities to speak.~~ If someone is unable to attend a public hearing but wishes to submit testimony in writing, it can be emailed, mailed or faxed to the City Clerk. Written testimony will be copied to the Council and included in the official record of the hearing.
- 8) At the discretion of the Mayor, non-controversial resolutions or other matters may be passed as part of a consent agenda. If any Councilmember wishes to discuss an item on the consent agenda, that item shall be removed from the consent agenda and placed on the regular agenda for that meeting.
- 9) Council meetings shall be recorded on an appropriate media and shall be preserved for at least five years ~~one year~~. Meetings and worksessions will be simultaneously broadcast on the Takoma Park cable channel. In addition, videotapes or other video media of the meetings will be available for the public to check out from the library. Copies of the ~~videotapes~~ are also available upon request if costs are paid for by the recipient.

Adopted this ____ day of _____, 200__.

Attest:

Catherine E. Waters, CMC
City Clerk